

Listing of Claims:

1-15. (canceled)

16. (currently amended) A method of packaging integrated circuits, comprising:

providing a first mold plate comprising a first non-planar surface;

providing a second mold plate comprising a second non-planar surface, the first and second non-planar surfaces forming upper and lower surfaces of a mold cavity when the first and second mold plates are engaged;

transferring a mold compound through a distribution system coupled to the mold cavity to substantially encapsulate an integrated circuit, the distribution system comprising a gate runner coupled to the mold cavity, the gate runner operable to funnel the mold compound into the mold cavity, the gate runner including a bridge insert operable to decrease wear on the gate runner as the mold compound is transferred through the gate runner; the bridge insert [[comprises]] comprising a ceramic bridge insert, the ceramic bridge insert including a metal oxide composite.

17. (currently amended) A method of packaging integrated circuits, comprising:

providing a first mold plate comprising a first non-planar surface;

providing a second mold plate comprising a second non-planar surface, the first and second non-planar surfaces forming upper and lower surfaces of a mold cavity when the first and second mold plates are engaged;

transferring a mold compound through a distribution system coupled to the mold cavity to substantially encapsulate an integrated circuit, the distribution system comprising a gate runner coupled to the mold cavity, the gate runner operable to funnel the mold compound into the mold cavity, the gate runner including a bridge insert operable to decrease wear on the gate runner as the mold compound is transferred through the gate runner; the bridge insert [[comprises]]

comprising a ceramic bridge insert, the ceramic bridge insert including a metal nitride composite.

18. (currently amended) A method of packaging integrated circuits, comprising:

providing a first mold plate comprising a first non-planar surface;

providing a second mold plate comprising a second non-planar surface, the first and second non-planar surfaces forming upper and lower surfaces of a mold cavity when the first and second mold plates are engaged;

transferring a mold compound through a distribution system coupled to the mold cavity to substantially encapsulate an integrated circuit, the distribution system comprising a gate runner coupled to the mold cavity, the gate runner operable to funnel the mold compound into the mold cavity, the gate runner including a bridge insert operable to decrease wear on the gate runner as the mold compound is transferred through the gate runner; the bridge insert [[comprises]] comprising a ceramic bridge insert, the ceramic bridge insert including silicon nitride doped with titanium nitride.

19-20. (canceled)